

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12711

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: MORE POLITICIANS ARRESTED

SUMMARY. LONG-AWAITED ARRESTS ON AUGUST 20-21 OF TWO MAJOR LDP DIETMEN FOR LOCKHEED BRIBES CAME ALMOST AS ANTICLIMAX. ONE ARREST, OF NAKASONE MAN, MAY BE USED AGAINST PRIMIN MIKI BY LDP LEADERSHIP CHALLENGERS. SIMULTANEOUS ARREST OF SOCIALIST DIETMAN ON NON-LOCKHEED EXTORTION CHARGE SPREAD CORRUPTION TARNISH BEYOND LDP. ASAHI SHIMUB'S LENGTHY EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH LOCKHEED'S KOTCHIAN BROUGHT UP ANOTHER ALLEGATION OF NAKASONE INVOLVEMENT WITH KODAMA BUT OTHERWISE APPEARED TO CONFIRM
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FEELING THAT US HAS SUPPLIED TO GOJ AUTHORITIES THE

LOCKHEED DATA THEY REQUIRED. GOOD NEWS FOR LDP WAS BIG VICTORY IN VERY CONSERVATIVE YAMAGUCHI PREFECTURE OF ITS CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR AGAINST OPPOSITION CANDIDATE WHO CAMPAIGNED ON LOCKHEED ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. TOKYO PROSECUTORS HAVE ARRESTED TWO MORE LDP POLITICIANS ON CHARGES OF TAKING BRIBES FROM ALL NIPPON AIRWAYS (ANA) IN EXCHANGE FOR FAVORS CONNECTED WITH ANA'S PURCHASE OF LOCKHEED TRI-STAR AIRBUSES. ON AUGUST 20, FORMER PARLIAMENTARY VICE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT TAKAYUKI SATO WAS ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY TAKING TWO MILLION YEN (\$6,500) FROM ANA. SATO IS A MEMBER OF NAKASONE FACTION AND IS CURRENTLY CHIEF OF LDP GENERAL AFFAIRS BUREAU. ON AUGUST 21, BIGGER FISH, TOMISABURO HASHIMOTO, WAS ARRESTED FOR TAKING FIVE MILLION YEN (\$17,000) FROM ANA. LDP ELDER HASHIMOTO, 75, WAS MINISTER OF TRANSPORT IN SATO CABINET FROM 1970 TO 1971 AND WAS LDP SECGEN UNDER HIS FACTION LEADER TANAKA FROM JULY 1972 TO DECEMBER 1974. ARRESTS CAME AS BLOW TO BOTH FACTIONS CONCERNED AND LDP, BUT NOT AS SURPRISE SINCE PROSECUTORS HAD BEEN LEAKING WORD OF IMPENDING ARRESTS FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

2. JUSTICE MINISTRY CRIMINAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR YASUHARA TOLD DIET AUGUST 19 THAT SEVERAL OTHER POLITICIANS WERE IMPLICATED IN PAYOFFS BUT THAT STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS AND OTHER LEGAL PROBLEMS WOULD PROBABLY PREVENT THEIR ARREST, THUS MAKING THEM "GREY NAMES." HE SAID IT WAS DIET'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DECIDE ON RELEASE OF THESE NAMES AND ALSO TO DECIDE WHO SHOULD BE INCLUDED ON LIST. WITH "ANA ROUTE" FOR LOCKHEED PAYMENTS APPARENTLY EXHAUSTED BY PROSECUTORS, THEY ARE NOW SAID TO BE READY TO MOVE TO "KODAMA ROUTE." HAVING ALREADY QUESTIONED AILING RIGHTIST KODAMA ABOUT THIRTY TIMES, THEY WILL REPORTEDLY STEP UP QUESTIONING OF HIS HEIR APPARENT, TSUNEO TACHIKAWA, WHOM THEY ARE HOLDING ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE LAW VIOLATIONS. KODAMA BEING OLD HAND AT TRACK-COVERING, HOWEVER, TRAIL MAY BE LESS THAN HOT.

3. NEWS OF HASHIMOTO'S ARREST SHARED FRONT-PAGE SPACE ON AUGUST 22, SOMEWHAT AWKWARDLY FOR JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY

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(JSP), WITH HEADLINES REPORTING ARREST ON EXTORTION CHARGES OF ONE OF ITS DIETMEN, TOSHIO KANASE, FRESHMAN JSP LOWER HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE FROM CHIBA PREFECTURE, CHARGED WITH DEMANDING TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS FROM CONSTRUCTION FIRM TO PREVENT DIET DISCUSSION OF ONE OF ITS EXECUTIVES' MISDEEDS. KANASE'S ARREST HAD NO EVIDENT CONNECTION WITH LOCKHEED PAYOFFS, BUT WAS VIEWED BY PRESS AS UNDERCUTTING JSP'S ABILITY TO CAPITALIZE ON LDP'S LOCKHEED TROUBLES. KANASE

HAS BEEN EXPELLED FROM PARTY AND MAY RESIGN HIS DIET SEAT,
AS HAS HASHIMOTO.

4. ALSO IN HEADLINES OVER WEEKEND WAS BEGINNING OF ASAHI SHIMBUN SERIES REPORTING EXCLUSIVE EIGHT-DAY (SEVENTY-HOUR) INTERVIEW BY WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT YOSHIO MURAKAMI WITH FORMER LOCKHEED CHIEF EXECUTIVE KOTCHIAN. KOTCHIAN'S DESCRIPTION OF HOW KODAMA PULLED STRINGS, WHILE NOT PRODUCING ANY MAJOR REVELATIONS, HAS TENDED TO CONFIRM THAT JAPANESE INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN ON RIGHT TRACK. ASAHI HEADLINED FIRST INSTALLMENT, HOWEVER, WITH KOTCHIAN ALLEGATION THAT KODAMA HAD OVERCOME A ROADBLOCK TO LOCKHEED SALES WITH A PHONE CALL TO THEN MITI MINISTER NAKASONE--WHICH LATTER LOST NO TIME IN DENYING.

5. ONLY GOOD NEWS FOR LDP IN RECENT DAYS WAS EASY VICTORY AUGUST 22 OF LDP GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE IN YAMAGUCHI PREFECTURE ELECTION. JOINT OPPOSITION PARTY CANDIDATE HAD STRESSED LOCKHEED ISSUE, BUT WAS SWAMPED BY UNUSUALLY HIGH TURNOUT IN WHAT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN A CONSERVATIVE STRONGHOLD. HOW LOCKHEED WILL AFFECT NATIONAL ELECTION OUTCOME IN AREAS WHERE TRADITIONAL VOTING PATTERNS DO NOT APPLY, HOWEVER, REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

6. COMMENT. WHILE SATO AND HASHIMOTO ARE NOT SMALL FRY, THEIR ARREST MUST HAVE SEEMED NEARLY ANTICLIMATIC TO A PUBLIC WHICH HAD BEEN WAITING FOR MORE ARRESTS SINCE TANAKA WAS APPREHENDED FOUR WEEKS AGO. OF THE TWO, ONLY SATO HAD A CURRENT PARTY POSITION (HE WAS QUICKLY REPLACED), AS GENERAL AFFAIRS CHIEF RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING AND MANAGING ELECTIONS. HIS ARREST IS LIKELY TO BE USED BY LDP OPPONENTS OF MIKI AND HIS ALLY NAKASONE AS A LEVER, THOUGH PROBABLY A SMALL ONE, IN CURRENT
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LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE. HASHIMOTO WAS LIKELY TO RETIRE SOON AND DID NOT HOLD A PARTY POST, SO IMPACT FROM HIS ARREST WILL PROBABLY BE LIMITED, EVEN THOUGH IT FURTHER TARNISHES LDP IMAGE AND DAMAGES ALREADY INJURED TANAKA FACTION. ARREST OF A SOCIALIST, WHILE IT DOES NOT LET LDP OFF HOOK, MAY SERVE TO ENCOURAGE VIEW THAT POLITICS PER SE IS DIRTY BUSINESS.

7. IN SOME CONSERVATIVE CIRCLES THERE IS GRIPING ABOUT GOJ'S GRANTING OF IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION TO KOTCHIAN, WHO HAS PROCEEDED TO ADD HIS GRATUITOUS INPUT TO AN ALREADY SIMMERING POT. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT SO FAR AT LEAST, KOTCHIAN HAS NOT SAID ANYTHING WHICH WOULD GIVE JAPANESE IMPRESSION THAT US JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FAILED TO PROVIDE GOJ AUTHORITIES WITH ALL RELEVANT LOCKHEED DATA.

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